

Manuel Valenzuela quotes regarding Palestine

Living in the occupied territories is like living in Warsaw ghettos of the 1930's and South African Bantustans. It is akin to dwelling in Indian reservations, those cesspools of nothingness in the lands of America from where millions rotted away their once vibrant existence. Gaza and the West Bank are squalors of humanity acting as giant prisons, where dense refugee camps are considered cities, their perimeters encircled by fences, walls, Israeli tanks and the ever watchful eyes of trigger-friendly snipers. Enormous prisons within occupied lands, preventing contiguity, freedom of movement and any semblance of a sovereign state are the true definition of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The labeling as anti-Semitic of anyone critical of the state of Israel's policies in the continued destruction of Palestinian identity and the increasing domination into American foreign policy no longer has the sting of threat or intimidation it once mastered. For too long this masquerade has been used to silence those opposing anything Israel, shouted at anyone disseminating truth and seeking justice. Like the boy who cried wolf, this charade has lost its power or hypnotic control, and today only serves to breed more anger and resentment against the apologists and smear mongers protecting the cancerous tentacles of Zionism and the crimes against humanity it spawns.

The time has come to stop bending over to the dictates of intimidation and scare tactics used by Israel's protectors,

defenders and apologists. The time has come to say Never Again to such fictional libel and slander whose only purpose is the continued subjugation of truth and awakening. The labeling of anti-Semite does not bother us, nor does it stop us from writing truth to justice and reality to intimidation because we refuse to be frightened into submission and silenced into acquiescence by a mechanism we know to be false.

We are above your labels, above your intimidation and smear tactics, following the path of truth in the voice of our writings and in the convictions of humanity. If pursuing truth, fighting criminality and awakening justice makes us anti-Semites, then guilty we are. If seeing the dehumanization, exploitation and utter destruction of the Palestinian people makes the voices of reason anti-Semitic, then guilty we stand. To defend the humanity of other Semitic people is to defend humanity itself. To speak out against injustice and dehumanization makes us human, to defend it makes you complicit.

To be Palestinian Arab in the land usurped by European Jews is to be considered untermensch in the territory your forefathers once called home. The devastation fifty-five years of invasion, occupation and state terrorism has had on both people and land has created the conditions by which Gaza and the West Bank can today be called Hell on Earth, pockets of destitute emptiness where opportunity is extinct and any relevant future is a but a hollow fantasy.

Unearthed from the colon of the planet Palestinians dwell, the

squalor in the occupied territories is beyond compare, instituted and exacerbated by the state of Israel in acts of unhindered and systemic malevolence. The intent of such inflictions of emotional distress and incessant pain and suffering is the breaking point of millions of Palestinians, the realization that it is better to leave the land you know and love rather than live in perpetual imprisonment of spirit and humanity.

The desire to expand borders and territory, an addiction to greed and the aspiration to cleanse Palestine of Arabs manufactures in the Israeli government a policy of wicked objectives bursting with cold and calculated cruelty. Thus, the ill-treatment of Palestinians by Israel makes life so unbearable, so hard and depressing that it is a triumph of the human spirit that so many remain, unwavering and strong, even as the weight of utter wickedness is enforced generation to generation.

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To live inside these vast prisons and internment camps is to struggle with the daily existence of Israeli suffocation and dehumanization that you know is purposeful as it is deliberate. It is to feel Israeli claws strangulating your esophagus, denying you of the air to breathe and the sustenance you need to survive. Life under Israel's merciless rule means that sixty to seventy percent of your people are unemployed, unable to provide for their families, as commerce is almost non-existent and access to Israeli business almost impossible. It is to live in worlds of child undernourishment and lack of healthcare, as Israel's policies make indigent millions of families who desperately need to feed and treat their children.

To be Palestinian is to be trapped in a vicious circle that refuses to let you escape. From birth your undernourishment outmaneuvers your development, stunting your growth, making your immune system weak and altering your ability to learn. Lack of nutrients and perpetual levels of stress make your environmental upbringing unlike anything on Earth, a constant battle being lost by both your body and mind.

The trouble in the Middle East stems from the fact that a European people with no continuity with the land arrived and colonized a native population that did. Today, this colonization has morphed into outright apartheid and dehumanization. The state of Israel, it must be understood, was born in sin. It was created in large part thanks to the ethnic cleansing and dispossession of a native people who today are trapped in large concentration camps of suffering and utter decay, living

encaged in the last vestiges of their original land. Israel's birth coincided with the spawning of serious crimes against humanity that have through time only been exacerbated, continuing to this day with ever more barbaric levels of suppression, persecution and subjugation.